

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

- 1(Currently Amended). A data storage system comprising:
a communication network;
a client application coupled to the network and generating an access request for stored data, wherein the client application lacks a priori knowledge
5 of the location of the requested data;
an intermediary server coupled to the network to receive the request;
one or more data storage devices accessible through the intermediary server and having a plurality of data units, including the stored data that is requested by the client application, stored at selected locations therein;
10 a storage server having knowledge of the location of the data units in the storage devices and having an interface for communicating with the intermediary ~~servers~~ server;
processes within the intermediary server responsive to a received data access request for communicating with the storage server to obtain
15 knowledge about the location of requested data ~~from the data in response to a received client request~~; and
processes within the intermediary server for obtaining the data from the specific location and serving the data to the requesting client application.
- 2(Original). The system of claim 1 wherein the data is returned such that the client remains unaware of the specific location of the data.
- 3(Original). The system of claim 1 wherein the intermediary server has a lower latency connection to the client application than does the storage server.
- 4(Original). The system of claim 1 wherein at least some of the storage devices comprise direct attached storage for the intermediary server.

5(Original). The system of claim 1 wherein at least some of the storage devices comprise network attached storage.

6(Currently Amended). The system of claim 1 wherein at least some of the storage ~~device~~ devices are configured as a storage area network.

7(Original). The system of claim 1 wherein the access request is represented by a token.

8(Currently Amended). The system of claim 1 wherein the processes for communicating with the storage server further ~~comprises~~ comprise transmission of a token representing the requested data.

9(Currently Amended). The system of claim 1 wherein the processes for communicating with the storage server further ~~comprises~~ comprise processes for receiving a resource locator from the storage server.

10(Original). The system of claim 1 wherein the processes for communicating with the storage server further comprise processes for receiving a file name and file path from the intermediary server.

11(Currently Amended). A method for managing on-network data storage comprising the acts of:

providing a communication network;

5 receiving requests for data within an intermediary server from a plurality of external client applications coupled to the network;

storing units of data in one or more data storage devices accessible to the intermediary server;

associating each ~~storage~~ request with a token representing the request;

10 sending the token to a storage server coupled to the network and having an interface for communicating with the intermediary server;

causing the storage server to return specific location information corresponding to the request associated with the received token;

causing the intermediary server to access the data storage mechanism
15 using the specific location information to retrieve data at the specific location;
and

delivering the retrieved data to the client application that generated the
request.

12(Original). A method for transferring data between network-
connected computers comprising the acts of:

storing a data object at a specific location in a network-connected
storage mechanism;

5 transmitting a token representing the data object from a first network-
connected computer to an intermediary computer;

in the intermediary computer, using the token to identify the specific
storage location of the data object;

causing the storage mechanism to transfer the data object to a second
10 network-connected computer.

13(Original). The method of claim 12 wherein the step of sending the
token further comprises sending an identification of the second network-
connected computer.

14(Original). The method of claim 12 wherein the act of transferring
the data object comprises transferring the data object to a plurality of network-
connected computers.

15(Currently Amended). The method of claim 12 further comprising:
storing copies of the data object at multiple network-connected storage
mechanisms;

5 using the intermediary computer to select one of the multiple network-
connected storage mechanisms; and

causing the selected network-connected storage mechanism to
transfer the data object to a second network-connected computer.

16(Original). The method of claim 12 wherein the step of causing the storage mechanism to transfer the data object to a second network-connected computer comprises:

- transferring the data object to a front-end server topologically close to
- 5 the second network-connected computer; and
- transferring the data object from the front-end server to the second network-connected computer.

17(Currently Amended). The method of claim 12 wherein the data object at the specific location is referred to as a primary data object, the method further comprising:

- causing the network-connected storage mechanism to proactively
- 5 redistribute ~~redistributed~~ data objects by transferring in addition to the primary data object, one or more data objects that are sequentially related to the primary data object.

18(Original). A data distribution service comprising:

- one or more data storage mechanisms holding a plurality of data objects at specific non-public locations;
- an interface for receiving tokens, the tokens associated with particular
- 5 ones of the data objects and the tokens lacking specific location information indicating the locations of the data objects in the one or more data storage mechanisms; and
- in exchange for payment, supplying the specific non-public locations of the data objects associated with the received tokens.

19(Currently Amended). A method for version control of a data object comprising:

- receiving a token representing a first version of a data object;
- using the token to identify a second version of the data object; and
- identifying a specific storage location of the second version data object in response to the received token.